

109TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 549

Expressing the sense of the Senate regarding modern-day slavery.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 3, 2006

Mr. SANTORUM (for himself, Mr. PRYOR, Mrs. DOLE, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. CORNYN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

DECEMBER 9 (legislative day, DECEMBER 8), 2006

Committee discharged; considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate regarding modern-day slavery.

Whereas the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.) states that the Declaration of Independence recognizes the inherent dignity and worth of all people and states that all men are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, including the right to be free from slavery and involuntary servitude;

Whereas the United States outlawed slavery and involuntary servitude in 1865, recognizing that those evil institutions must be abolished;

Whereas, in the 21st century, as many as 27,000,000 people are suffering as slaves throughout the world and in the United States;

Whereas an estimated 800,000 persons are trafficked across international borders each year;

Whereas an estimated 18,000 to 20,000 victims are trafficked into the United States each year;

Whereas approximately 80 percent of victims are female and an estimated 40 to 50 percent of victims are children;

Whereas many of the victims are trafficked into the international sex trade, which includes sexual exploitation of persons involving activities including prostitution, pornography, sex tourism, and other commercial sexual services;

Whereas modern-day slavery also includes bonded labor, forced labor, forced marriage, chattel slavery, and child labor;

Whereas the Department of Health and Human Services states that human trafficking is the second largest criminal industry worldwide;

Whereas traffickers use threats, intimidation, manipulation, coercion, fraud, shame, and violence to force victims into modern-day slavery;

Whereas a trafficker may be a family friend, someone well-known within the community, someone in law enforcement, or a member of an organized criminal network;

Whereas traffickers capitalize on areas of conflict and post-conflict, transitioning states, sudden political change, economic collapse, civil unrest, internal armed conflict, chronic unemployment, widespread poverty, personal dis-

aster, lack of economic opportunity, and natural disasters;

Whereas traffickers prey upon the vulnerable, ethnic minorities, and people without citizenship;

Whereas modern-day slavery thrives because of its high profitability and minimal risk due to little rule of law, lack of enforcement, and corruption of law enforcement institutions;

Whereas populations vulnerable to trafficking are growing due to the rising numbers of orphans in developing countries due to civil conflicts and the HIV/AIDS pandemic;

Whereas the spread of HIV/AIDS and other sexually-transmitted diseases poses a global threat and creates a particular challenge for victims of modern-day slavery involved in the international sex trade;

Whereas the loss of family-support networks due to modern-day slavery contributes to the breakdown of societies;

Whereas trafficking has a negative impact on the labor market in countries and perpetuates a cycle of poverty;

Whereas trafficking brutalizes men, women, and children, and exposes them to rape, torture, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, violence, dangerous working conditions, poor nutrition, drug and alcohol addiction, and severe psychological trauma from separation, coercion, sexual abuse, and depression;

Whereas organized criminal groups, gangs, document forgers, brothel owners, and corrupt police or immigration officials funnel trafficking profits into both legitimate and criminal activities;

Whereas modern-day slavery strips human beings of dignity, respect, and hope for their future; and

Whereas no country or people are immune from the effects of modern-day slavery: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

2 (1) the abolition of modern-day slavery should
3 be a priority of the United States foreign and do-
4 mestic policy;

5 (2) the United States should continue to bring
6 together governments, international organizations,
7 nongovernmental organizations, and individuals to
8 form a comprehensive coalition to fight modern-day
9 slavery;

10 (3) the Federal Government should continue to
11 expand protection and legal options for victims of
12 modern-day slavery;

13 (4) the abolition of modern-day slavery should
14 be prioritized at the 2007 Group of 8 (G–8) Summit
15 in Germany; and

16 (5) the trade policy of the United States should
17 reflect the commitment of the United States to free-
18 dom for all people.

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